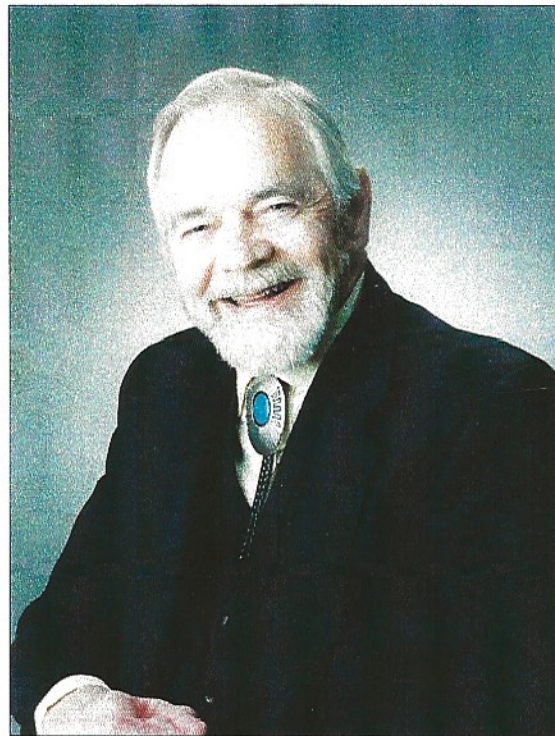


A Life
Or
One Man's Journey



By
Edward S. Brown

Note added by Edward's nephew Eric Martz (Farmington CT) in September, 2024:
Edward S. Brown (see his bio in [Wikiipedia.Org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_S._Brown)) gave this unpublished autobiography to members of his family in 2005. It is undated, but in its last paragraph, Edward mentions that he is 85. He turned 85 on March 9, 2005, and he died on June 6, 2005. Therefore,
this autobiography was completed in Spring, 2005.

A BIRTHDAY ODE

A man with
Soul as large
As the wide expanse
Of the land he chose
To dwell in.
Wind eroded rocks
Encompassing sky
Acres of purple sage
And Space.
A man who opens
His heart
To all the game-of-life
Has dealt him.
His wounded body
Ravaged long ago
On blood dark
Monte Cassino.
Who for all his days
Bears those wounds
As the price
Of wanton life
So sweet
Miraculous
Abundant
Bitter.
He embraces it all
Quaffs from his
Bottomless chalice
The great
Fermenting brew.
This man

My brother
Who loves women
Cherishes one above all
She walks
In the mystery that is woman
Chooses to give herself
To this man
Whole in spirit
Whole in the grace of her love.
Together they greet
The treasure
Of each days beginning
With murmurs and laughter
Like the sound
Of birds in springtime.
Sometime with coffee
On their patio
Where even this sprawling city
Looks small
On the endless horizon.
Or in the Jemez mountains
Where human spirits soar
With lofty summits
Greeting the morning
In their fragrant
Virgin
Ponderosa forest
In the looming presence
Of Mt. Redondo
Eternal
On their horizon

Where greatness
Peace
Healing
Fill their hearts.
Together creating home
For their chosen sons.
Together building their church
Where spirits bloom.
This brother
Who served his nation
Long after his war was over.
Citizen always
Who serves his city.
Who takes his love
And courage
To the newly wounded
Who must learn to live
In wheelchairs
As he has done
These forty-seven years.
These two with whom
I am fortunate
To share this planet
Who live with grace.
Are ever beloved
Admired
Treasured
Emulated.

I salute you.

Becky Brown
March 9, 1992
For Ed

A Life
Or
One Man's Journey

"God's in his Heaven and All's Right With the World"

Robert Browning.

Life was fun and easy. I was five years old and living a sheltered life with my 10 year old sister, loving mother and hard working, protective father. We lived in a very nice upstairs apartment in a peaceful middleclass neighborhood in Terre Haute, Indiana. Our mother was a very fastidious person who kept us and our home very clean. During the summer we children played all morning after which mother would give us a clean up all over our bodies using wash pan and wash cloth. After putting clean play clothes on us and cleaning herself up we ate lunch and then walked three blocks to a lovely neighborhood park where many mothers brought their children for an afternoon of gentle play. In my mind the living was easy and all was right with the world.

In 1925 our dad bought a five-room bungalow in north Indianapolis. This move was an exciting event in my life. Wow! A whole new world to uncover and enjoy. Mother and Dad seemed to find it easy to fit in wherever they went because we always went to church and were warmly welcomed into the new congregation. My sister was in elementary school, Public School Number 75 which was just across the street from our house. Boy, was I jealous of her; Camp Fire Girls, friends coming and going, church outings and so many things she was involved in that I was left out of. But that was OK because I had a whole neighborhood of boys and girls close to my age, from middle class families like ours.

I remember exploring our new house. I was all covered with goose bumps because I was so excited. Mother and Dad had their own bedroom and Becky and I had our own bedroom. My first brush with electricity up close and personal was the with the wall sockets that had to be examined. The wall sockets were the old fashioned types that had a threaded opening into which an adapter was screwed. Then a lamp could be plugged in. So here was this curious hole in the wall into which my finger had to be inserted. OUCH! OW! Thus began a very strong interest in things electrical. Just think. If this little hole could give me such a jolt and light up a room there just had to be something wonderful someplace that brought all this about, didn't there?

These were the roaring twenties. Times were good and everyone in our part of the world had jobs that paid a steady income. It wasn't long until Dad bought a new car, a four-door sedan. We were on easy street. Dad was on the Board of Stewards of the Methodist church and was Business Manager of the Indianapolis Local Union of Bricklayers and Hod Carriers. From our house it was only a few blocks to the Street Car Line and that was our passport to almost anyplace in Indianapolis. About once a month mother would get my sister Becky and me all cleaned up to go downtown and we would go to a movie at the marvelous Indiana theater which had a full Wurlitzer Pipe Organ and a stage show between movies. Movies were silent and black and white, but what did we know? They were wonderful! While we were having lunch at a cafeteria, shopping the L. S. Ayers department store and seeing a movie, Dad, who was secretary and treasurer of the Union, spent the morning at the Union Office bringing the book work up to date

for the week. Then he would meet us after the movie for hamburgers at the White Castle after which we went to the downtown open air market to buy supplies for the week. I shudder to think how unsanitary conditions were. Skinned and cleaned chickens, turkeys, sides of pork and quarters of beef were hanging in the open air with no protection from flies and no refrigeration. Some farmers had iced cases to display their sausages and fish catch. But life was good and I had mostly easy days and nights.

"The best laid plans of mice and men oft times gang agley."

Robert Burns

In 1928 an old friend of our dad approached him with a proposition that he couldn't resist. This friend was president of a bank in Evansville, Indiana and he wanted to start a branch of the bank in Bloomington, Indiana with Dad as manager. Dad was always good with numbers and had considerable skill as an executive, so he decided to accept this opportunity. We moved to Bloomington late in 1929 and I was all excited about new friends and a new school. I'm not so sure my sister was glad to leave Washington High School in Indianapolis for Bloomington High School, but it was not long until she had many new friends and activities. By now she was fifteen years old and enjoying new boy friends at church youth fellowship. Soon Dad was on the Board of Stewards of the First Methodist Church. But I was worried about mother. She wasn't well and the move had taken its toll on her minimal reserve strength. She had been ill very often even while we were living in Indianapolis. It seemed to me that she was getting worse because she was bedfast much of the time.

I was in the fourth grade and making good grades as well as making new friends. My friends included girl friends; I think my first love affair was when I was in the fourth grade. After school hours I was busy selling magazines door to door for which I could earn nice prizes like a BB gun or a bicycle. I sold Woman's Home Companion, American and Collier's. I did pretty well with this business and soon had several regular customers. I earned some nice prizes such as a jacket that said "Collier's" on the back and a cap with the "American Magazine" name on it. Sometimes when I knocked on one door after another for an hour with no sale I would come home discouraged. Mother, would likely be sick in bed and from her bed would give me a pep talk and send me back out to the next street, and soon I would make a sale. I learned that about one out of fifteen calls would result in a sale.

When I was about age eight Mother was still well enough most of the time that we could do wonderful things together. She was the prettiest woman in the world with her long, beautiful dark hair down below her waist and dark brown eyes. I think the song "Dark Eyes" must have been written about her. She had a creamy complexion and Dad liked to keep her dressed in the latest styles. She was small enough to look good in them. She was a loving, generous person who prepared meals that were better than those prepared by the finest chef. She had a great sense of humor and had inherited her mother's sense of irony in conversation.

She was the cleanest person I knew and insisted that my sister and I be the cleanest we could be all the time. She had a Singer treadle sewing machine and made pretty clothes for my sister Becky. She always sent me to school dressed in the nicest clothes of any of the children in my

class. On Sunday morning she dressed in her finest clothes and was a "raving beauty". Dad was always very proud of her and liked to see her looking so lovely. Her sisters always told me she was the prettiest girl in the Ragle family of three girls and two boys. I thought all of them were attractive but I agreed that she was simply beautiful, both in physical appearance and in spirit.

Although it was obvious to me that Mother and Dad were very much in love, they were very secretive about anything to do with sex. Often when they were in their bedroom with the door closed I would hear Dad teasing her and then hear her musical laugh. They not only had a good time with us when the whole family was together but they had a wonderful time together. Mother was sensitive to the feelings of others and would cry if Becky or I did something naughty, but if she and Dad had a tiff the air hung heavy with her dejected spirit. Dad had a pretty short fuse and could get angry over the most minor things, but when he would get angry with her for some reason, it wasn't long until he would be making the most abject apology.

In 1928 it became even more apparent to me that there was something very wrong with my mother. She was ill, even bed fast much if not most of the time. I knew she was having "vaginal bleeding", whatever that was. Of course in those days children were not supposed to know about it when mothers were pregnant or ill. So there was this whispering whenever my mother's condition was discussed. Eventually it seemed that Dad and my sister were doing more of the housework and meal preparation than was the case in most families. Even little brother had to do some of the chores like helping with washing the dishes and windows. Dad had the courage of a lion through all this.

I did not know it at the time, but mother was suffering from a fatal illness that had its onset soon after my birth. The doctor told mother and dad that she should not have any more children after sister was born because Mother's female organs were in trouble and could not be corrected. But after waiting five and a half years during which mother seemed to keep getting better they decided to try one more time. Hence I was born and Mother started a long, slow downhill slide.

Sometimes when she had to stay in bed all day because of her sickness, I would wish I could comfort her. I would ask if I could lie down with her and sometimes she would let me do so. Then when I was lying in bed with her I did not know what to do or say. I might say something foolish like "why don't you get up and see if you don't feel better"? Or I might say "In think you just need to rest; why don't we take a nap together"? If she stayed quiet then, I could not go to sleep and felt restless to be doing something else. I would silently say to myself "It is your own fault you silly boy, why did you have this idea in the first place?" Mother seemed to realize that I was of uncomfortable, so she would whisper "Why don't you go play with your erector set or train?" I would be out of bed in a wink. But when I got to my room I still felt uncomfortable and wished I could do something to make her feel better. I did not realize the heavy cloud of death that was to take my mother away.

"Faced with a difficult situation, it's to himself that the man of character turns."

Charles de Gaulle.

Our Dad, Edward S. Brown, was a remarkable man in many ways. He had grown up in a small southern Indiana river town and attended a high school that was very good for those days. He loved poetry and while I was growing up he went around the house in his daily activities singing Methodist church hymns or reciting great poems by Whittier, Longfellow, Poe, or prose by Wordsworth and Browning. But he also loved outdoor work and became a skilled bricklayer, a job that his dad taught him. After graduation from High School he worked in Evansville, Indiana at the Axtell Buggy Factory as a wood worker. As soon as he had saved up enough money, he quit work and attended Evansville Business College from which he received a certificate of graduation that said "Completed with highest honors". Dad was always a magician with any form of arithmetic and algebra. Back he went to the Buggy Factory as head bookkeeper. He was 20 years old.

It was while he was in Evansville and teaching Sunday School at the West Methodist Church that he fell in love with one of the daughters of the Reverend John Ragle, pastor of the church. Her name was Golden Glee Ragle. He began to court her although she was barely sixteen years old. Dad was twenty-one years old by now, so they had to be chaperoned on their dates together. A year later The Reverend John Ragle was reassigned by the Methodist Bishop to the Methodist church in Spencer, Indiana. The Reverend Ragle probably thought "Now I think that Ed Brown will leave my daughter Golden alone". That did not stop Dad from pursuing Golden Ragle. On Friday after work he would saddle his horse and ride from Evansville to Spencer, an eight or nine hour trip. Mrs. Rebecca Ragle, later Grandmother Ragle would have a snack and a bed ready for him. He usually stayed the week end, and started riding home on Sunday evening. Dad and Mother were married in June 1912 and went to Niagara Falls for their honeymoon.

Dad was not really a learned man, but by his own efforts he became almost a scholar. He bought the "Harvard Classics Five Foot shelf of books" and thus was well schooled in the great classic literature of our time. He took his bible study seriously and knew the bible better than any other adult I knew. He spent much of his life as a lay leader in the Methodist Church. He also had a great sense of humor and loved to tell jokes. Some of his jokes I heard so many times I could tell them word for word including vocal expressions. Dad was also played practical jokes on any body and every body. Sometimes he would tease my sister until she was almost in tears. I think he should have been a little easier on her because she never did understand or accept teasing. He also teased me and I got a kick out of it. At least I had his attention didn't I? One time when I was about eight years old Dad and I were walking down a busy sidewalk in downtown Indianapolis. He had been holding my hand and then began to push my hand away by pushing it with his fingers. This was an old trick, so I wasn't going to fall for it. I took my hand down and kept walking along beside him, I thought, but he stopped walking. When I got to the corner I knew to take his hand while we were crossing the street, so I did, I thought. The man beside me said "Son, are you here by yourself"? I looked up at this total stranger and was very embarrassed. As I looked around for Dad, there he was about 20 feet behind me and laughing at me. But Dad was also a very generous person. Panhandlers would pick him out of a crowd to ask for money. He always gave them some bit of help. When questioned about this Dad would say "I would rather be fooled five times by somebody who did not really need help than to pass up one person who was really desperate for a helping hand." There were not many agencies in those days to help people that were down on their luck.

Dad loved his family and took us on picnics, took us swimming and took us to every state park in Indiana. On Sundays we were awakened by Dad singing church hymns. We seldom missed church, and Dad usually taught a Sunday School class. He could recite long bible passages from memory. While he worked at the bank he frequently had to make business trips so he would take me with him for companionship in the car. That was good because he often became very sleepy while driving; sometimes I had to shake his shoulder because he would nod off to sleep while driving.

"I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay;
I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away."

Anonymous.

About the first of June, 1930 Dad was taken to the hospital near death with a ruptured appendix, which was usually fatal in those days. Becky and I were taken to the home of our Aunt Lola (Mother's sister) and Uncle Lawrence Miller while dad was so ill and in such danger. In June our church had bible school and of course I attended. We learned a new bible verse every day. One day in the middle of one of our classes my older (college age) cousin Vanda came to the bible school and asked for me to be excused. I was very puzzled. What could she want with me that was so all fired important? Then I realized that my dad must be worse, so I began crying. But that was not the reason for my cousin Vanda to take me out of bible school. Mother had developed a high fever and was in a coma. I did not know what a coma was but I knew mother must be very ill so now I had two reasons for crying. My Aunt Lola and my sister were at the hospital, but Vanda was very solicitous about caring for me. It didn't help. I couldn't be consoled. Uncle Lawrence finally agreed to take me to the hospital to see mother. I never saw her until the funeral, because before we arrived at the hospital mother was dead.

Dad was ill for a long time with his life and death struggle against infections. He was so ill the doctor was afraid to tell him Mother had died for fear that he might just give up trying to get well. For several weeks my sister and I lived with our Aunt Lola and Uncle Lawrence and their five children. I have often wondered since then what they would have done with two more kids to care for if Dad had died too. I think they would have taken us in and cared for us like their own. Dad finally recovered enough so the three of us went home. I missed mother terribly and cried myself to sleep every night for almost a year. I am sure that both Dad and Becky missed her even more but in my presence they were strong and reassuring. Dad and Becky decided that we would stay together as a family and manage somehow. Becky, age 15 did most of the cooking and housekeeping, and Dad helped as much as he could while still managing the bank.

Mother died when I was ten years old. Her death hit Dad a devastating emotional blow. Although, at the time, I was not aware of his suffering because he hid it pretty well, but in later years, as I think back on those days, Dad was not functioning well. He went through the motions of making a pretty good life for his family, but he developed severe stomach problems; I think he had an ulcer. Also he became accident-prone. He had a series of small accidents with the car, and

was so absent-minded he would lose his train of thought right in the middle of a conversation. He would forget social appointments and business appointments. One night he woke me up in the middle of the night tromping around the bedroom and swearing (Dad's swearing was very mild such as "Shoot!" or "Foot!") and complaining. I said "Dad, are you all right?" "No, he replied, I forgot a board meeting tonight and I was supposed to make a presentation". He kept doing things like that until we moved to Mt. Vernon when I was 15 years old. Then some of the pressures of that petty loan company job, which I will describe later, were off his shoulders and he seemed much more like his old self.

"Whatever deserves doing deserves doing well."

Nicholas Poussin

My sister Becky, Margaret Rebecca Brown, was born in September 1914 and of course everyone who knew our family was celebrating the birth. In March 1920 I was born and named after Dad; Edward S. Brown. But Grandfather Ragle said I was a buster boy so the nickname Buster stuck with me until I was 14 or 15. My big sister was very precocious and had a great imagination. She always seemed to me to be orienting her life toward high goals. While we were doing the dishes she would tell me amazing stories that never ended; they just had an ongoing continued story theme. Also she taught me how to read and write. A child was supposed to be six years old in order to enter public school, and I wasn't going to be six until the next March. Mother talked to the principal and it was decided that I had learned so much in kindergarten I would be allowed to enter first grade when I was five years old. There wasn't any other kid in Indianapolis who was more excited. Thanks to my sister it soon was apparent that I could read and write better than almost any other youngster in the class. The next spring when it was time for summer vacations and promotion to second grade my teacher told mother I should skip second grade and enter third grade in the fall. Now I really was big stuff. Wasn't I? On reflection I am not so sure. Starting to school earlier than most, and skipping a grade meant that I was always smaller and physically less developed than my peers. However I toughed it out and sailed through elementary school easily.

Becky was a dreamer and an emotionally sensitive person. She loved to read, and at least once a week during the summer she and I would walk the mile to the Halstead Public Library. She would come home with an armload of five or six books while I would bring home one or two, usually two, thinking the presence of the books would make me seem to be a scholar. However, I also enjoyed reading. I liked action novels and far out tales such as "The Monster of Frankenstein" by Mary Shelly or "Tarzan the Ape Man" by Edgar Rice Burroughs. I read all of the Hardy Boys' novels. Many of the houses along the way to the library had retaining walls because the yards were cut into hillsides. As we were walking to the library of course I just had to walk along on every wall in front of those houses. Some of them were pretty high, say four or five feet. Becky would say "If you fall and hurt yourself, it is your own fault."

Our mother died when I was ten years old and Becky was fifteen. That threw not only a terrible emotional load on her but also she tried her best to be a sort of mother substitute to me. I was very sad with the loss of our mother, but surely it was even a more tragic time for her. As I remember those days I can't imagine how she managed to seem so in control of herself. Being a

very emotionally sensitive person she must have suffered much more than I.

Becky and Dad made the best of an impossible situation and gradually all three of us finally began to make a new life style for ourselves. Dad threw himself into his work like the world depended on his efforts. He would come home for supper and then go back to the bank for two or three hours so his bank records and documents would be above reproach. He frequently made a loan to some friend when he knew the financial burden was more than the friend should be borrowing. Dad was a pushover for any one needing a loan. That doesn't mean he shaded the books; the person always was the kind who paid his loan back, though often under some degree of hardship. Becky was off in her world of literature and poetry, first in high school and then in college. Not that she neglected her home and pesky little brother. She was especially caring and loving. She played the piano with the skill of an artist. At Christmas time she would bring out the book of Christmas carols so that we could sing while she played them. After mother died Dad kind of went into a depression at Christmas time. I think that if Becky hadn't insisted we have a tree and celebrate Christmas there might not have been any Merry Christmases at our house.

"Life is what happens to us while we are making other plans."

Thomas La Mance.

The stock market crash, which had taken place in 1929, was followed by the great depression. Bloomington's economy went into a downward spiral. The limestone quarries began closing their operations. Then the furniture factory went bankrupt. The bank was still solvent, but was teetering on the edge of going broke. In 1932 the Evansville bank and the Bloomington branch bank went bankrupt. The assets of the Bloomington bank were bought by a company in St. Louis. Dad said the company was like a group of "loan sharks" and he hated their business practices but had to keep working for them because it was a steady income when many men had no job. Dad felt he needed to keep working because my sister was ready to start college at Indiana University and Dad felt that it was very important for her to get a college degree. Dad was ahead of his time in this because most families did not encourage their daughters to attend college.

When she was 17 Becky fell in love with a wonderful guy named Karl Martz, so we became good personal friends of the Martz family, although we already knew them well through our church. After Mother died I fell into a funk that lasted three or four years. I lost interest in school and spent my time and energy building a menagerie in the back yard. Both Dad and Becky were very understanding and tolerant of my rabbits, white mice, turtles, covies, snakes and my little alligator. I did find an interest and a challenge in Boy Scouts and was inspired by the Scoutmaster who was a real leader of boys. Dad had taught me how to swim when I was four or five years old, so it did not take long for me to earn my swimming and life saving merit badges.

In January 1935, Becky and Karl Martz were married and moved to Nashville, Indiana where Karl went to work as a potter. He had a Master's Degree in chemistry from Ohio State University. Dad decided Becky did not need his financial assistance after she was married. Grandfather Brown was getting pretty old and Dad was worried about him living all alone. He was more than willing to give up his hated job at the loan company, so we moved into the old

Brown home in Mt. Vernon, Indiana, an Ohio river town of 5000 population. It was just us three men living in that old house that grandfather had built with his own hands. Grandfather had hired a woman to come in and do the cooking and cleaning. He was a grand old man and I learned to love and respect him. Dad kept a little money coming in by doing odd construction jobs. He was a journeyman bricklayer and knew house building as a fine art. But the depression kept everyone we knew under a pall of "hard times." There were few jobs to be had.

"The first law of holes is that when you are in a hole you have to stop digging."

Benjamin Franklin.

By this time I was pretty well recovered from the fact that I no longer had a mother, so I had better get on with my life. In Mt. Vernon High School I found that my old love of school was coming back. I was enrolled in a college bound program and I took all the math and science courses I that were offered at Mt. Vernon High School. During my senior year a man from Purdue University visited the Mt. Vernon High School on a recruiting tour. He talked to all the seniors at a small convocation especially called for the purpose of explaining the opportunities available at Purdue Universities. He offered to grant personal interviews for students who were really interested. I asked for a personal interview with him and wanted to know all about Purdue University. He spent about half an hour with me explaining what a wonderful school it was and he said that with my interest in and good grades in science and math I would be naturally oriented toward one of the colleges of engineering. Already I was interested in anything electrical so I especially wanted to know about Electrical Engineering. By the time our session was over I knew where I was going to college. I was ready to start to Purdue right away. Was I excited? You bet!

Mt. Vernon was a close knit social community and this motherless boy somehow became a favorite of the mothers of the boys and girls my age. Every month the Eastern Star and the Masonic Lodge sponsored a dance in the big drill room of the National Guard Armory. The mothers would decorate it like a ballroom and I was always invited. Not only was I invited, but also it was the policy to pair each boy with a specific girl. This way no one was left out and no one was without a dancing partner. One girl was particularly nice to me and she invited me to her home on several occasions. She taught me how to dance and her mother taught me some of the social graces I was so woefully in need of learning. My teachers at Mt. Vernon High School were very helpful and guided me through the toughest of subjects offered by that school. I learned to how to study and I studied several hours a day. I made mostly "A"grades on my report cards.

One day my math teacher asked me to stay after school because he needed to talk to me. I thought they had finally caught up with me and were going to give me a lecture on how to be a good student instead of the pretender I was. Not so. Mr. Robb asked me if I would like to have a paying job for after school hours and on Saturdays. I was so excited I was nearly shaking and I couldn't say "yes" fast enough. He gave me a name and address and told me to go to that person and tell them Mr. Robb had sent me for a job interview. I think I ran all the way down town to the Highland Meat Market. Then I realized I wasn't dressed up or very presentable after being in school all day and I was all sweat covered because of running about 3/4ths mile. I was so

nervous I just knew I would be a flop and the owner would send me on my way. It was a great relief to find out that the manager of the store was neither a frightening man nor was he out to test my courage. It is good that he was like this because I realized I did not have enough courage to "fill a test tube." I got the job and was glad to get it.

This job paid 15 cents an hour for five afternoons a week plus all day on Saturday. If there were any child labor laws in Indiana, no body enforced them in my part of the State. Farm boys went to work as soon as they could hold a hoe or shovel. If a town kid had a job he worked whatever hours were called for. School classes were dismissed at 3:00 PM and I would hurry downtown to work. Often I worked until 7:00 or 8:00 PM. Then I would walk the mile home, and eat a cold supper, Dad and Granddad having eaten. After supper I always studied hard for a couple of hours then went to bed. On Saturday I would leave for work at 7:00 AM and work until 10:00 or 11:00 PM. We stayed open for business until the last customer straggled in from the bar next door. Then we had to clean and scrub the place. After we took all the meat from the display cases I scrubbed the inside of them with ammonia while the boss swept the floors and straightened the few groceries we carried. Then I walked the mile home and fell into bed by midnight or sometimes 1:00 AM. I sure never had to worry with insomnia!

I realized that if I were going to attend Purdue University it would have to be at my own expense because times were tough and Dad couldn't get very many repair or remodeling jobs. Thus began my lifelong determination to save money. I allowed myself 10% of my earnings for spending money but the rest went into a savings account.

The man who owned the meat market where I was working lived in Evansville, a nearby large city, where he also owned a meat packing plant. He had become manager of the plant when his dad became too old to manage the business. George Schmadel was a hard living but easy going German. His wife prepared huge meals of foods I had never heard of. Often on Sunday he invited me to his big, lovely home for the day. He had two daughters and a son, all of whom were grown. None of them were interested in the family business, so he was worried about what would become of it. He took a liking to me and was very nice to me. They owned a summer home on the Wabash River and often in the summer when business was slow he would close the meat market at noon on Saturday and invite me to spend Saturday afternoon and Sunday with him and his wife at their summer home.

Thus another brand new world opened for this high school kid. Mr. Schmadel made his own home brew and they drank a lot of it. There was no alcohol allowed in my house, and when I tasted his beer I did not like it. But I liked him and enjoyed the times I was in their home. Mrs. Schmadel made sausages of meat I didn't know was edible, such as brain sausage and liver sausage. They ate pickled pigs feet and ox tail soup. I learned to really like a lot of those German foods. I had learned the business fast and became a reasonably good butcher. I could cut a roast or ham within two or three ounces of the size a customer ordered. I kept working for Mr. Schmadel and during the summer after I graduated from High School Mr. Schmadel fired his manager and made me manager of the meat market. No sweat for this 17 year old. I inherited my dad's gift with numbers thus, for example, when a customer would give me a five for a purchase of \$3.69, I could figure change owed them quickly and accurately. Old-fashioned cash registers did not compute change for you, On Saturday night I would close the books for the week and

always came out so the store account reconciled with the bank. I would make the night deposit at the bank on my way home from work.

In July 1937 Mr. Schmadel made me an offer that was hard to refuse. He said that since not any of his three children were interested in taking over the management of his packing plant he would give me a chance at it. The proposition was that I would live with Mr. and Mrs. Schmadel. He would teach me every facet of the business and treat me as if I were his own son. He believed that within five years I would be ready to become an full partner with him and eventually he would turn the entire business over to me with the understanding that he and his wife would have a generous income from it for the rest of their lives.

How could I possibly turn down a proposition like this for the unknown future of four or five years at a University? I spent many a sleepless night trying to decide what to do. Dad said he thought I should get a college education if I could figure out how to finance it. He said that if I chose Indiana University he knew many businessmen in Bloomington and he believed he could steer me into a part time job. But he did not know anyone at West Lafayette, Indiana, home of Purdue University, so if I went there I would be on my own.

I was determined to attend Purdue if possible, so I took three days off from work and hitch hiked to Purdue. First I went to the pastor of the First Methodist Church, Dr. Otto Scott Steele. I introduced myself and asked him for guidance. After talking with me at length, he gave me a lead. He referred me to a Mrs. Tudor who had a rooming house for girls. She needed a man who could be a general handy man: mow the lawn, repair the plumbing if needed, fix the electrical service if needed, keep the coal fired furnace hot in the winter and do any other jobs that needed doing. I had learned all these skills from dad when I was in high school, so I said "Sure, I can do all that". Mrs. Tudor would give me a room in return for my job as her "Mr. Fixit". She worked as a cook in a restaurant, so she would be gone from early until late six days a week.

So here I was a green horn freshman in a big house full of twelve female students! After they got acquainted with me they were very nice to me and sometimes some of them who were studying Home Economics would invite me to dinner to share a new recipe. I was so innocent that I never gave a thought to getting any closer than just being a friend. It would have been easy to have some love-making going on, but it never happened. I was too busy with studying and working to give it a thought although two of them appealed to my idea of the kind of girl I would like to date. However we were living just too close to each other and I was too shy. Also I did not have either the time or the money to get involved with a girl friend.

"Patriotism is not a short and frenzied outburst of emotion
but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime,"

Adlai E. Stevenson

When I was about 15 years old and a junior in High School I took a course in "Current Events." Required reading included the "Louisville Courier-Journal", then a highly respected newspaper of national repute. Also we had to read and report on articles in "Time" magazine. This was in

1935. I became intensely interested in what the German nation was "up to." It sounded like very bad news for the peace loving nations of the world. Also whenever one went to a movie there was usually a news segment called "Movietone News." They often showed the buildup of the German war machine while France and England were "looking the other way." Especially this was true of England, although France reportedly had the best prepared defense in Europe with the impregnable "Maginot Line." (The German armies later bypassed the Maginot Line and within 4 days of their initial attack France surrendered.) Now only England was left to try to stop the German Nazi War Machine.

I continued to study the events in Europe with interest and concern as I went through my senior year in High School. My dad was a staunch member of the Republican party, and hence he was automatically an isolationist. My sister was such a pacifist that she refused to even discuss these things. I entered Purdue University in 1937 when I was 17 years old, and a very shy freshman. Purdue was a "Land Grant College," so each man was required to study two years of R. O. T. C. (Reserve Officer Training Corps) unless he was willing to sign an affidavit that he was a conscientious objector, and could get a signed statement to this effect from a pastor, school principal, or business person. I was glad to get the training because the war clouds were building up fast in Europe.

In 1938 the Germans occupied the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia, and the rest of Europe agreed to complain, but the Munich Pact of 1938 recognized that nothing would be done except to OK the German action. I could not believe it. Furthermore, in 1939 Germany invaded Poland on the pretext, that the Port of Gdansk belonged to Germany. Of course this was just the beginning of Hitler's conquests. For the most part it was only England and France who decided to oppose this invasion with a declaration of war against Germany. America remained an isolationist nation. Winston Churchill, out of office and without power continued his unheeded warnings about the tragedy that was befalling Europe. However in 1940 the desperate British called on him to replace the discredited Neville Chamberlain as their leader and Prime Minister. President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were on close terms, but Roosevelt was not able to help much because of the politics of the strong pacifist movement in the churches of the United States and the powerful isolationist Republican members of congress. It did not help that the Aviation Hero of the United States, Charles Lindberg went to Europe, examined the vast German air force and toured our nation telling crowds that the vaunted German war machine was bound to conquer all of Europe, including England, and that might not be such a bad thing because it was the only way Europe would ever become united. This was in spite of an ever-increasing number of Jewish immigrants who were warning us of the true tragedy that was engulfing Europe. Americans just did not want to hear it, especially professors in the Liberal Arts Universities of the United States.

During my first two years at Purdue I completed my required two years of "Military Science and Tactics." If one had high enough average grades in the University (B+), and straight A grades through the first two years of Military Science and Tactics, one could apply for advanced R. O. T. C. I could not see how the United States could avoid getting into the war eventually, and I wanted to be as well prepared as I possibly could be. I had met all the requirements and was admitted to two more years of Military Science and Tactics. In my Junior year in college I was elected to the Fourgiere Society, a military honorary unit for cadet officers. One had to be

outstanding in his personal conduct and character. There was no hazing; this was a serious organization that had the goals of developing one's moral and spiritual strength. Even the Fraternities at Purdue had very little hazing, and no drinking in those days. I felt very comfortable as a member of the Fourigere. It was a demanding extra curricular activity and my work as a member helped prepare me for some difficult years ahead. I was promoted in rank each year and in my senior year I was promoted to the position of battalion executive officer, the second highest rank in the corps.

This part of my life was loaded with difficult decisions. I was very active in the Wesley Foundation at Purdue, a student activity of the Methodist Church. The pastor at the Wesley Foundation was a very strong pacifist. Although I was elected Vice President of Wesley during my junior year, and this lead almost automatically to the Vice President becoming President during his senior year, our very pacifist pastor advised me that I could not be elected student president of Wesley during my senior year because of my beliefs in the necessity for military training. I could not give up my military training because I believed our nation had to save Europe from the German Nazis. After a conference with Dr. Steele, the pastor of the First Methodist Church, a financial and spiritual supporter of the Wesley Foundation it turned out that if the Wesley student body elected me president, no one had the right to prevent it. I was so elected and at the end of my senior year I received a commendation from the Methodist Bishop. I did serve with some distinction as president of Wesley. I was a devout Christian and worked hard to do an excellent job.

"A mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions."

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

What else did I do with my life at Purdue? When I was a sophomore I was having a tough time making it financially, because my dad did not have a steady job and could not help so I was working two jobs as well as taking at least 17 hours of engineering courses every semester (one semester it was 21 hours). I attended a convocation at which the speaker was R. B. Stuart, Purdue Financial Officer. After the convocation I hung around and asked Dr. Stuart for an appointment. He was very kind and said to drop by his office at my earliest convenience. I was there the next morning at 7:30 A.M. He was already at work. I told him that I would like to help organize a cooperative residence for men, but had no capital. After he spent about 20 minutes questioning me, he called his secretary and told her to accept my application for a grant to rent a house for 15 men. I followed his lead in recruiting men who needed an education but had little money. Within two weeks we 15 men had a cooperative house to live in and we lived for \$21.00 per month for the rest of the school year. Every Saturday we had mandatory clean up from 7:00 AM until 9:00 AM. I was elected president of the Kagawa Coop and hence was Chair of the five man board. We had strict rules for behavior, and noise was restricted during study period which was from 7:00 PM until 10:00 PM. Trouble makers and those who were not willing to abide by the rules were asked to leave and find another home. There was always a waiting list for admission and most of us had to work because our parents were not able to afford to send their children to college.

We did our own cooking, washing and disciplining through elected officers and a board of the residents through the rest of the school year. R. B. Stuart would drop in on us, unannounced, from time to time, just to check up on us. That Kagawa Cooperative House (now Kneale Coop because a benefactor by the name of Kneale is still operating in the year 2003, and still has the goal of making the living arrangements at Purdue affordable to poor students. Today it has about 35 residents and is in a house that was purchased with low interest loans from the Purdue University Student Housing Corporation (SHC). The goal of this organization was to provide safe, reasonable housing for students. Several of us helped to start other cooperative residential houses. To do this we organized a committee to appeal to the Student Housing Corporation for financial assistance. I was elected Student Vice President of the Student Housing Corporation; this was the highest office a student could hold in this body, which was primarily a body of administrative officers of the university. Today there are four cooperative houses for men and four for women on the Purdue campus.

Of course I learned to schedule my time and energy better so that the last two years I had time for a love affair with a girl whom I admired and with whom I spent a lot of time in activities of the Wesley Foundation and at worship services in First Methodist Church. When I graduated I was eight weeks past being twenty years old.

I graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Electrical Engineering. At the commencement ceremonies in May of 1941 Purdue President Elliott handed me my diploma as an Electrical Engineer, Regular Army Colonel De Beers handed me a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery, and Regular Army Sergeant Sherock handed me my orders to active duty. A few weeks later I was on my way to Fort Sill Oklahoma and a series of events which were to change my life forever. I arrived at Ft. Sill in August 1941, five months before Pearl Harbor. After three months of intensive schooling in how to be an officer I was assigned to active duty in the 36th Field Artillery Brigade. It was Corps or heavy artillery, but also had a Research and Development battalion. During the period between World Wars One and Two the First Field Artillery Observation Battalion had been conducting research and development for locating enemy artillery by using technological methods. As soon as General Crane, the Brigade commander found out I had an engineering degree, he assigned me to the First Field Observation Battalion.

A Very Young Second Lieutenant

I passed my army physical easily, although I learned that I was partly color blind. This has never been a serious problem for me. At Fort Sill, I worked hard to be one of the best Lieutenants in my class. My overall grades placed me second in a class of 50 young men. However something else more important than military training happened to me while I was stationed at Fort Sill which is near Lawton, Oklahoma. All my life I have tried to be a faithful Christian, and I always went to church or chapel services. It was at Centenary Methodist Church in Lawton that I met a young lady named Betty Jane Christian. For me it was the beginning of a new love affair even though she had only recently celebrated her 16th birthday and I was 21 years old. Her parents invited me to Sunday dinner after Sunday morning worship services, so I spent several Sundays at her home. We spent Sunday afternoons together, and went to youth services at Centenary Methodist Church on Sunday evenings.

After graduating from the advanced officer training at Fort Sill, I was assigned to the 36th Field Artillery Brigade, an organization of three regiments of Corps (Heavy) Artillery and an Observation Battalion, altogether about 2400 men. The brigade was stationed at Fort Bragg North Carolina. The Brigade Commander, General Crane exercised the traditional military prerogative of requiring all new officers to come to his home for a brief visit. I was instructed to report to his office the next morning. I was "quaking in my boots". What had I done that was the wrong thing to do? The next morning when I was told by his aide to go into the general's office, I decided that I was going to be honest as I knew how. I was amazed to find that he was looking at my transcripts from Purdue University. He said something like "Lieutenant, I have a special job for you." My spirits began to lift. After he described the objectives of the specialized organization called the First Field Artillery Observation Battalion, he said does this appeal to you? I said "Yes sir!!"

When I reported for duty to Major Ellerson, the Battalion Commander, he assigned me to Battery A. Within two weeks the outfit was on maneuvers, and I was learning how to become an officer who worked to provide meteorology, surveying, and relocation of enemy artillery to our own artillery for purposes of counter fire. These missions required engineering skills including knowledge of calculus and other advanced math. I loved it, and worked hard at it.

Because the organization had been doing mostly research during the period between World Wars One and Two the personnel had not been doing much typical warfare training such as close order drill, physical training and use of small arms. It was necessary that the personnel be toughened up and trained for combat conditions. Captain Parks, commander of Battery A, and I were appointed physical training officers for the battalion. It was our job to lay out a close order drill schedule: calisthenics, 20 mile hikes with full packs, and generally toughening up of the men. I had already excelled in marksmanship with the 45-caliber pistol and the 30 caliber rifle. Colonel Ellerson called me in and said "Brown, you are the battalion's expert in the use and care of small arms." I suppose he knew this because my ROTC records had been following me into new assignments.

Colonel Ellerson continued: "Tomorrow morning you will start training the officers and non commissioned officers one platoon at a time, in the use of the 45 caliber pistol." I said "Sir I am a bit rusty and would like to have a couple of days to prepare. His response was "Brown, you are the battalion expert in the use and care of small arms. Tomorrow morning you will start training the officers and non-commissioned officers one platoon at a time, in the use of the 45 caliber pistol." Needless to say I spent most of the night with the training manual on the .45 calibre pistol. My first class began at 08:00 hours the next day. Thus I really did become the battalion expert in the use and care of small arms. After all officers and enlisted men became comfortable with the .45 calibre pistol, Colonel Ellerson gave me the assignment to train our battalion personnel in the use and care of the .30 calibre rifle. Following this it was the .30 calibre machine gun and then the .50 calibre machine gun, even though I had only seen the 30 calibre machine gun at a distance, and had never seen a .50 calibre machine gun. That's the army for you; you are an expert at something because someone of higher rank says you are. Needless to say I burned a lot of midnight oil in preparation for these training sessions. I use the French spelling for "calibre" because that was correct during WW II.

It was decided that our outfit was ready for some simulated field and battle conditions, so we were sent to Camp Blanding Florida where we found ourselves on maneuvers in difficult living conditions. When the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor took place a few days after our arrival in Blanding, we really began the serious business of working night and day preparing to do our part in the war, whatever our part might be.

"Over There, over there; Send the word, send the word
over there that the Yanks are coming.....!"

Irving Berlin

In February of 1942 we were loaded into a troop ship named "Orchades", which the British pronounced "Or-khi-dees", bound for England. There were 46 ships in our convoy and it took 28 days to reach Liverpool because the convoy went only as fast as the slowest ship, which was an old freighter that had a maximum speed of eight knots. Also we zigzagged as a convoy in hopes torpedoes might miss our ships. I did not know the terrifying danger we were in from German U-boats (submarines) until after the war when I was reading Winston Churchill's history of World War II. Million tons of Allied shipping were sunk that year.

While we were in England, we trained constantly during the next three months. Colonel Ellerson gave Captain Parks an assignment as S3 (Plans and Training" officer). So now I was it as Battalion Physical Education Officer. It was an assignment I enjoyed. I drove myself harder than any other man in the Battalion and Major Hughes used to kid me that I was "bucking" for a promotion. Maybe he was right. As battalion physical education officer I was kept busy trying to keep our men in top physical condition. Later we learned that we were simply marking time and keeping sharp until American shipping could bring sufficient troops and supplies from the United States to England so that we could invade North Africa.

"War does not determine who is right, only who is left."

Anonymous.

In November, 1942 my outfit, having been assigned to support the 36th Infantry division took part in the invasion at Oran on the northwest coast of Algeria. The French troops who were stationed at Oran, who were ordered by their Nazi occupiers to prevent us from getting ashore, offered little resistance because we overwhelmed them and beside that they hated their Nazis occupiers more we did. The next five weeks found us racing eastward across North Africa with the goal of capturing Tunis, which was heavily fortified by the German army. The Germans were skilled soldiers and artillerymen. They would stop us with a vicious counter attack, then disappear during the night to set up defenses on the next ridge or mountain. The Americans and British suffered heavy casualties. During the battle for Kasserine Pass, General Patton lost almost an entire tank division, which was captured by the Germans. Most of the men in Battery B of the First Field Artillery Observation were captured, and those men, all of whom had become my good friends, spent the rest of the war as prisoners of war.

During the African campaign, my outfit supported every American, British, and Free French division at one time or another. The winter weather was bitter cold and windy. We were constantly miserable. In May General Rommel's famed Africa Corps surrendered in mass. The Germans had been caught in a pincer between the Allied army on the west and General Montgomery's battle hardened British troops on the east. All at once the allied armies had eighty five thousand German prisoners to feed, house, clothe and care for including their medical needs. These German troops had been badly treated and nearly starved so they needed an amazing amount of care. Their care was up to our army of occupation and the German prisoners were treated well. Some of our soldiers were almost jealous of them because we knew that the war was over for them for those prisoners.

We spent the next three weeks near a little French fishing village named Herbillon, located on the Mediterranean coast of Tunisia. It was a welcome, beautiful and warm interlude. While we were preparing for our next assignment we were re-supplied with equipment and personnel to replace our losses.

Down the path to the sea was a small fishing village named Herbillon. Colonel Ellerson befriended the village mayor in an effort to buy bread and wine. In turn, the Mayor invited Col. Ellerson to go on a boar hunt with himself and a French Guide. Col. Ellerson was given the option to bring another officer along and Col. Ellerson invited me. We were to meet in the village square early in the morning on the day of the hunt. The mayor had arranged for us to arrive before the French forces during World War I and he had been gassed during the latter days of that war. The mayor told us the French Colonel had been gassed and because we were young and healthy we should not expect our guide to be able to keep up the fast pace so please allow him to set an easy pace while walking through the terrain. Each of us had our own rifles as did the mayor and the guide. The French Colonel spoke good English so he explained how the hunt was to be conducted in order to prevent someone from being shot accidentally. Then he started up a steep path and he was setting a fast pace. Before the morning was over he had nearly walked us "to death". And we thought we were in excellent health, which we were, but we were not used to that kind of hiking. That evening we bought fish, bread and wine from the villagers. We had a feast, and not many of us were very steady on our feet after the party was done and we were going back to our pup tents.

Earlier in North Africa, I was positioned on a bluff as a forward observer. I was very carefully observing a French farmhouse that we suspected was occupied by German troops. In a few minutes a German soldier came out the front door, probably to relieve himself. The house was surrounded by a thick hedge and was neatly laid out which was typical of the French. I should say those were the days of European Empires. "The sun never sets on the British Empire" was a common saying. So, also did the French and Spanish have empires although these were not quite so extensive, but at that time part of Morocco and Algeria were part of the French empire. That German soldier came out of the house and walked down the front walk then turned and followed the hedge line to the corner. At the same time an American squad was preparing to take possession of the farmhouse. The point man of the American squad had dispatched to scout the place. He crawled up to the hedge, then stood up and started toward the front. The German soldier and the American soldier met just at the corner of the hedge, and each was so surprised he dropped his rifle, turned and ran back from where he came from. Of course our squad soon

occupied the house and our infantry squad took eleven German prisoners. I did not want to destroy the farmer's home so I ordered a few rounds be dropped on each side of the house to keep the Germans quiet while our infantry squad took possession.

In July, 1943 we invaded the South coast of Sicily at Gaeta Beach. This was expected to be easy because of the major losses sustained by the German army in Africa. Not so. German generals were brilliant strategists, and had a Panzer division waiting for us. Panzer divisions were equipped with heavy tanks that could be used either as artillery or as tank vs. tank. Not only that, they had air superiority, and constantly dived bombed and strafed us on the beach. It was brutal, but we had to hang on or be driven back into the sea. After three days of heavy fighting we had a foothold and supply lines were able to start unloading food, trucks, tanks and artillery onto the beach. My platoon, in support of the advance infantry platoon, moved 15 miles inland to capture the small airport at Gaeta so that our air corps could start using this landing field. In 38 days of heavy fighting the allies captured all of Sicily. As in Africa, my Field Artillery Observation Battalion was able to do the job we had trained for, which was to locate enemy artillery and direct our own artillery fire onto German positions. Part of the time we had to serve as if we were infantry. I had become quite good at the job of serving as Forward Observer, which meant that I was with the leading infantry squad as their Field Artillery observer. It was deadly business, and our casualty rate was high. The Germans were skilled at laying ambushes for us. When our back-up troops came up to help, the Germans would retreat and disappear to the next positions, which were already prepared and occupied. Finally the Germans either escaped across the Messina straight into Italy, or surrendered.

An event which was poignant was when Captain Parks and I were reconnoitering for an access road to Messina. The French had built remarkable roads, bridges and railroads in Africa and Italy. The road from Palermo to Messina had been blasted out of a precipice so as to avoid going over the mountain. The retreating Germans destroyed it. So Colonel Ellerson delegated Captain Parks and me to reconnoiter the mountain trail to see if there was a suitable other route to Messina. The Italian people had suffered terribly under the boot of dictator Mussolini and this was especially true of people in remote villages. Captain Parks and I came to a small Italian village named Batapaglia. The people greeted us with flowers and kisses. We asked where the mayor was they told us he had hid himself in a cave in the mountain. Mussolini's bureaucrats feared American soldiers. Although the villagers were hesitant, they showed us a grainery that was bulging but locked. It was not our job to care for these people because our occupation troops were to do that, but how could we leave them half-starving? Captain Parks shot the lock with his .45 pistol. And we doled out a bucket of wheat to each family. But as pleasant as that was we had to move on. The trail finally dwindled to a goat path and we determined it was not suitable for tanks and artillery. It was dusk by the time we reached the village on our return trip. Those talented women had ground wheat, made flour and then spaghetti. They insisted that we stay for a village feast of spaghetti, wine and homemade bread. We hated to leave but we had to get back to our jobs. The Colonel was a bit put out with us for being so long. We did not tell him everything that transpired in that village.

"War is Hell."

Gen. George S. Patton, Others.

In September of 1943 the allied armies, on barge like boats, invaded Italy across the Messina Strait from Sicily. Who were "the allied armies?" Under the leadership of General Eisenhower the allied armies included troops from England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, France, Poland, Turkey, South Africa, Sweden, and numbers of other smaller nations as well as the United States. There were two divisions of French Moroccan Troops; these were Arab enlisted troops commanded by Free French officers. They were very brutal warriors and excellent night fighters. German troops often surrendered rather than face them in combat.

Just before the invasion of Italy the men on our invasion landing craft were told to take it easy on the native villagers because the Italian army had capitulated. There would be no softening of the beaches by naval gunfire and Air Force bombing as was the usual case before an invasion. This was to minimize damage to the Italian coast. When we started ashore we were met with intensive artillery fire and aerial bombing by the German Air force. Just because the Italians had capitulated did not mean the Germans had done so. The Germans had three divisions just waiting for us. So much for our intelligence! We spent a miserable three days hanging onto our beachhead. There was no place to retreat to. Our casualty rate was very heavy.

"War is mainly a catalogue of blunders."

Winston Churchill

This was the beginning of some of the most difficult and challenging combat in the European theatre during the war. Combat is a miserable business no matter when or where, so others who fought in different locations or theatres probably think their situation was the worst of the war. Southern Italy was very mountainous and full of little rivers, which were running much heavier than usual because of an early and heavy winter of cold, rain and snow. I think I was never warm or dry in Italy. And so it was that from the first landing on the shores of the Salerno corridor we were constantly on the low ground while the Germans held the high ground as well as air superiority. Also the German troops leap-frogged their positions so that when one battalion was bested by the attacking allies, that battalion would simply withdraw to new positions where defenses had already been prepared and dug in. These would be behind a defense line of fresh German troops who had their artillery and machine guns zeroed in on our attack approaches.

My battalion was "Corps Artillery" which means we had heavy artillery, 155mm long-range artillery. Therefore at one time or another my outfit was in support of every British, French or American division in our theatre of war. We were assigned to support whatever infantry division was most desperate for heavy artillery support. As the allied army gradually moved north through the mountains of southern Italy, I think we had to cross the Volturno river a thousand times, at least it was so winding that we had to cross it too often for our comfort. I felt sorry for the engineers because they had to build a temporary bridge at every crossing place because the Germans had destroyed the bridges as they retreated. Our engineers were usually working in the open where they were easy targets for the Germans. Casualty rates were high for the American engineers, and they were the only allied troops that had the materiel and supplies to provide the bridges. I later read that the British also had excellent engineers and they used materiel provided

by the U. S. Army. The Volturno river was as if someone had started north of Rome and drawn a series of zig-zags toward the south all the way to the coast. The river followed those zig-zags. There was no way to by pass the Volturno because it followed the only valleys between those mountains. Our armies moved in trucks and tanks so they had to follow the Volturno valleys and cross the river again and again. Often the infantry waded across where the river was shallow enough (chest deep), and as artillery forward observer I waded with them. Why did we wade? The trucks and tanks were using the bridges and those bridges were barely wide enough for a tank. There was not sufficient time for the military police to hold up vehicle traffic while an infantry company crossed on the bridge or for a specialized artillery unit like ours to cross the bridge. By "specialized unit" I mean the Observation Battalion personnel. Our equipment, but not personnel, was loaded on trucks that did cross the bridge.

In late October the winter snows began about a month earlier than usual. From then on we were either fighting in mud or snow and all the while the German army was firing artillery and mortars on us. You can see why I said the war in Italy was a very miserable business. Many of our Allied personnel became ill with flu or microbial diseases they picked up because of the difficulty in maintaining sanitary standards. It is said that armies suffer as many casualties from illnesses as from enemy fire. I do not know how true this is, but I know we were seldom up to full strength in personnel because of so many men being ill. On one occasion I was very ill with "yellow jaundice", a form of hepatitis. Having had hepatitis I was never able to give blood except for use in myself after surgery. On January 15, 1944 my platoon was supporting the Second Moroccan Division in the mountains east of the Abbey of Casino. In Italy the German Armies seemed to always have the higher ground and we were always having to try to advance uphill under artillery fire, mortar fire and rifle fire. The Moroccan divisions were very tough and ruthless. Their troops were North African Arabs and their officers were Free French. The allies had been attempting to drive the Germans off this commanding mountain range since early November. Our casualties were very high and I suspect the German casualties were also very high because of our constant shelling and bombing of their positions. By this time our American Air Force was beginning to have enough planes to make a difference. However the German armies were well dug in and just waiting for our attempts to scale the mountain. They always seemed to have the advantage. While we were on this mountain I received a call from battalion headquarters to report back to battalion for a "briefing". Colonel Ellerson sent my dear friend Lieutenant Thompson to take my command while I was at battalion. When "Tommy" was sent to take my place I spent half a day showing him the terrain and the locations of the enemy positions. It became obvious to me that Tommy was sick with flu or a severe cold. He did not need to be on this mountain in bitter cold and in knee deep or hip deep snow. I was afraid he was going to develop pneumonia.

At battalion Colonel Ellerson told me that Captain Parks, whom I admired and thought of with affection, had been selected to be sent back to the states to cadre (form) a new Sound and Flash ranging battalion. He would be given a prompt promotion to the office of Major. He had been told that he could pick any lieutenant from the battalion to become his executive officer. Captain Parks picked me and I was elated, not only because I knew I could work easily with him, but because it also meant we would be sent back to the United States where we would form and train the new battalion. I would undoubtedly be promoted to the rank of Captain. It was an exciting prospect because we also would be given ten days leave to visit our families as soon as we

arrived back in the states. However the printed orders for our transfers had not yet been received at battalion, just a verbal order sent from Brigade by radio. Colonel Ellerson was told that they would be arriving within five days. The Colonel told me there was plenty of work to be done at headquarters so I would be stationed there until our orders were received.. My response was that Lt. Thompson was a sick man and he should not be working in that miserable, dangerous place where my platoon was engaging the Germans. I asked the Colonel to let me go back to the front lines to be with my men until the actual orders arrived; I would send Tommy back and I believed he should take it easy for a few days in battalion "sick bay". Actually there was no such thing as battalion sick bay, but if a man became too ill to function, but not so ill as to require hospitalization, he could bunk down at battalion headquarters for a few days. Colonel Ellerson agreed that this was a good idea so Tommy would not become seriously ill. He arranged for Tommy to be cared for by the battalion Corpsman. The Corpsmen were specially trained first aid men similar to today's paramedic. I returned to the front and sent Tommy back to battalion. The Colonel was to send for me just as soon as the printed orders were received at battalion.

On January 21 there was a major thrust across the Rapido river toward Monte Casino. Both American and German troops suffered severe casualties. My platoon came under intense artillery fire from the German army and many of us were wounded or killed. Sergeant Clark had severe leg wounds that resulted in him losing one leg. Sergeant Getchen received a flesh wound, but was so shell shocked as to be unable to function in the combat zone ever again. Several of my men were killed. I received a spinal cord injury as well as a shattered right femur, left elbow and several flesh wounds. It was very difficult for anyone to get to our location, so it was at least two hours before Tommy was able to get an evacuation team up the mountain to our position. I probably would have bled to death except for the bitter cold weather. It was a few degrees above zero and we were in deep snow, up to our knees and sometimes deeper. Finally four men carried me down the mountain and put my stretcher on a modified Jeep, then drove me back to the nearest aid station. The aid station personnel were French and there were so many casualties coming in that they were over burdened with wounded men. This aid station was located in a barn but was under German observation, so it was not possible to evacuate the wounded during daylight hours because the Germans were firing at anything that moved.

The aid station had no beds or cots so we were lying on the ground.. Finally the barn was full of wounded so the nurses had to place incoming wounded on the ground behind the barn. Because of the major influx of wounded personnel the French aid station had run out of bandaging material and pain killing drugs. Therefore the two nurses and one corpsman tore sheets into strips and used them for bandaging. They had no water to give us, but they had five-gallon cans of wine. Most of us were very thirsty because of dehydration caused by loss of blood. When we begged for water the nurses gave us sips of wine which served to temporarily assuage our thirst as well as acting like a mild sedative. Finally nightfall arrived and with it came a hospital train (convoy of ambulances). We were placed on stretchers four to an ambulance, one man above the other and two men on each side of the truck. Battlefield ambulances were simply four-wheel drive trucks with enclosed backs kind of like a big van. The ride was terribly rough because the roads had been bombed and were in poor condition. I really suffered on that ride back to an American aid station, but when we arrived at about midnight the army doctor, a Captain, gave me a shot of morphine, started an IV and told the driver to take me immediately to the 38th evacuation hospital., which was another 8 or 10 miles behind the front. I think I passed out, but

the ride was so rough that the jerking and bumping kept me from any peaceful sleep. Finally the hospital was at hand and I was placed on a shock ward. After I was there for a few days, I realized that the shock ward was for the most severely wounded and most of us were expected to die because our wounds were so severe. Men were dying all around me. I was one of those expected to die. The 38th evacuation hospital was very short of personnel because the wounded were coming in so fast. Our shock ward consisted of a big tent, dirt floors, and two rows of folding army cots. There were six nurses and two doctors to care for about 40 seriously wounded men. The nurses were supposed to work 8-hour shifts and the doctors twelve hour shifts. In truth the nurses and doctors worked until they were so exhausted they couldn't work. Then they would throw a blanket on the ground and sleep a couple of hours before starting to take care of us again. I fell in love with those nurses because they were trying so hard to save us, but in spite of their wonderful care men died. Those nurses were so overwhelmed they would sometimes fall to their knees and weep.

Finally, after it was probable that I was not going to die, and they had done all the emergency surgery on me that the evacuation hospital was equipped for, I was loaded onto an ambulance plane and transported to the 33rd field hospital in Tunisia, North Africa. At this field hospital there was full service surgery and all the other facilities of a major hospital. I was placed on a ward where there were about 40 paraplegics, quadriplegics and hemiplegics. As was the case in the evacuation hospital I felt sorry for the nurses because they had more very wounded men to care for than they could possibly manage. The surgery facility was operating 24 hours per day and the doctors showed their fatigue. One brain-injured man woke me in the middle of the night and was yelling "You God damned German bastard I am going to kill you!" He had a piece of 2 by 4 about 4 feet long, and probably could have killed me because I was helpless. A night corpsman heard the commotion and interceded. A nurse quickly arrived and gave him a shot of some sedative that calmed him.

I was very ill and unable to keep any food on my stomach. A nurse named Louise Herrick seemed to be especially attentive to my needs. She asked me if she made a special drink would I try to drink it. Of course I said yes; she was not only a caring nurse but I immediately fell in love with her. She brought me a glass of cream colored liquid and said if I were to sip it maybe I would not vomit. It went down smoothly and stayed down, so she began bringing one of these to me three times a day. When I asked her what it was, she told me it was a glass of milk with two raw eggs a little cinnamon and an ounce of whisky stirred into it.

I learned this hospital had been made up of about half the staff of the Jewish General Hospital in Philadelphia. However they did not know what to do with us because only about one in one hundred thousand Spinal cord injured people survived more than a few weeks prior to World War II. They did a lot of things wrong, but they did enough right that we survived, thanks to the magic of sulphonamides and penicillin. It was in this hospital that I began to suffer almost intolerable pain. I think they must have taken me off heavy pain killers such as morphine. Also it was about this time that I developed terrible involuntary spasms in the lower extremities. My right femur had been shattered at the same time that my spine was cut by German artillery fragments, so the doctors had a dilemma; how could they stabilize my leg so it could heal when the spasms were jerking my legs, sometimes violently. They decided to place my entire body in a plaster cast, from my collar bones to my toes. It was called a double spika. The process of being

wrapped in a plaster cast caused real agony. I was suspended horizontally about three feet in the air with a sort of bicycle seat under my buttocks and a couple of small pads under my shoulder blades. My left elbow had been badly damaged also, therefore the plaster was wrapped onto my left arm so that it was kept in a position as if I were holding my arm at half mast as if to wave at someone. If I was given a sedative it did not help much, because I was in agony for about 30 minutes during the process of wrapping my body with plastered gauze which eventually "set up" into a rigid shell. Of course it did not help that it took another 30 minutes for the plaster cast to set. That cast kept my spasms stable, but caused at least six decubitus ulcers. I have known hundreds of World War II paraplegics but I am the only one I ever knew who was placed in a plaster cast. Could the doctor have been an old school man who was thinking of the days before Sister Kenney when people with polio were wrapped in plaster to keep joints from drawing up?

I think the 38th General Hospital had done all it could do for me, so I was just a patient waiting to be taken back to the United States. Eventually there was room for me on the hospital ship Algonquin, so I was one of about 3000 patients that were loaded onto the ship. I was placed in a ward full of men who were suffering from all kinds of wounds. There were probably 50 of us in that ward. We were in one of the big compartments of the ship. It only took seven days to arrive at Port Charleston, South Carolina. The ship trusted the Geneva Convention to protect it from German submarines and sailed at full speed in a nearly straight line to the U. S. The ship was painted white with huge Red Crosses on the sides and the top deck. A nurse told me there were masts with floodlights shining down on the ship so that it was brightly lighted at night.

One of the highlights of that trip was a nurse named Lt. Anderson, who had a Scandinavian background. Every night after the lights were turned low at 9:00 PM she would come in and sing Swedish and American folk songs. She had the voice of an angel. All of us fell in love with her.

When we were offloaded at Charleston it was afternoon. A doctor examined me and ordered a sedative because I was in such severe pain. I think I slept most of the evening and through the night. The next morning I was awakened given a face and hand washing and a technician drew blood for tests. Soon a man in a cooks apron and cap came rolling a cart to my bed. He said "good morning lieutenant. "How do you want your eggs cooked? And do you prefer bacon or sausage"? I could hardly believe what I was hearing! Fresh eggs? Sausage? Bacon? By this time I was about well from my weak stomach and could eat a normal diet. I told him "two eggs easy over, sausage and coffee, please." That was the only time in my life I had a bedside chef.

They did not keep wounded men very long at this naval hospital, usually not more than two days. So I was placed on a hospital railroad train and transferred to Billings Hospital in at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Indiana. At Billings I was on an orthopedic ward along with about three dozen officers who had battlefield injuries in various stages of recovery. I was the only spinal cord wounded man on the ward. It was nice to be on an open ward where there was some kind of action going on all the time. Some of the men were on crutches or canes and were well enough along to be given passes out of the hospital. They also drank a lot of liquor and often brought a bottle back with them. Liquor was forbidden but the head nurse Elvira Sealscott looked the other way so long as no one abused the privilege. An army colonel orthopedic surgeon came and examined me. He ordered the cast removed and made some suggestions for surgery to ease the awful involuntary leg spasms. When the cast was removed it was learned that

I had terrible decubitis ulcers on heels, hips knees and coccyx. And so began a siege of many months duration to get them well. Decubitis ulcers (bed sores) can be deadly if not given expert and painstaking care.

"The one thing we can never get enough of, or give enough of, is love."

Henry Miller

I had plenty of moral support from my family and friends. My dad, my sister, her husband and his father also came to see me as well as my old college girl friend who was working in Minnesota. People in my home town of Mt. Vernon, Indiana wrote to me, and I was able to telephone my family from a portable bedside phone, that is it was on a cart and there were a number of phone receptacles scattered throughout the ward so that the phone could be brought to one's bedside and the cord plugged into one of the receptacles. That made it very nice for those of us who were bedfast.

One morning Miss Sealscott, the head nurse, came to my bed and said I was going to be transferred to a special hospital in Louisville, Kentucky. She said that it would be exclusively for spinal cord injured patients. So the next day they loaded me onto a real Cadillac ambulance and sent a corpsman with me all the way to Louisville. I learned I was the first patient in that hospital which had only been completed a few days earlier. A beautiful nurse (they were all beautiful in my thinking) came in to welcome me and examine me all over, except that she laid a towel across my private parts. Those nurses went to great lengths to follow unwritten rules about having only men take care of anything to do with a patient's sex organs, including bathing. Later we had some nurses from Australia who had no such compunctions. They would wash us all over, including you know where. Most of our American nurses today have no such reluctance. Thus began another long siege of specialized care. Our doctor in charge, Major Warren V. Pierce, MD, a urologist, had seen only one spinal cord injured patient prior to WW II. This was because in those times spinal cord injured persons did not live very long, maybe two or three weeks. Sulphanomides and penicillin changed that, so now he had a spinal cord injured (SCI) person, then soon he had a dozen, then about 120 in three wards of about 40 men per ward. Because there was no history about how to take care of SCI patients, they really did not know what to do with us, so it was just educated guessing and trial by error. There were enough nurses so that they could work reasonable hours, and there were a number of volunteer mothers of servicemen who came in every day to help with our baths and light nursing care. We fell in love with them. Also the corpsmen were very busy. Probably the three most difficult things in the care of SCI patients are bladder, bowels, and bed sores (decubitis ulcers).. This is a very indelicate business, but it is brutally present in every patient for the rest of their lives. The doctor or a nurse would insert a Foley catheter for urine control. Foley catheters have an inflatable bulb on the bladder end so that when it is lubricated and inserted through the penis into the bladder, the bulb can then be inflated with a syringe of sterile water. The inflated bulb keeps the indwelling Foley in place until it is deflated and removed for cleaning and sterilizing. This was done once a week. These days the system is much improved and simpler. Whereas a nurse or licensed caregiver was necessary for inserting and removing the used catheter and replacing it with a new one, today the patient keeps a supply of clean (not necessarily sterile) straight (non-inflatable) catheters on hand. About once every three or four hours a catheter is lubricated and inserted until the bladder is drained; then the catheter is removed. The paraplegic patient can do this for himself (herself) nearly any place there is a rest room.

Bowels were a bigger problem. Enemas could be used, but over a period of years they cause the bowel tissues to degrade in their ability to function. Laxatives are too hard to control, that is to get the right amount so that there wouldn't be accidents. A person who has to sit down all the time in a wheel chair does not need loose bowels. Thus it was discovered that stimulation of the rectum muscle could be successful. Rubber gloves are donned, a lubricant applied to a finger and the finger is carefully inserted into the rectum through the anus. Usually a gentle working of the finger will stimulate the rectum to contract and expel the feces. Most paraplegics learn how to do these things for themselves, and sooner or later the whole business becomes almost routine. However for most quadriplegics the process is infinitely more complicated: quadriplegics can't do their catheter or bowel program by themselves which demands that they have a very understanding and capable caregiver, usually either their wife or a family member. Quite often the task of the caregiver becomes almost too much to cope with. Most SCI patients of WW II were not properly taken care of while in the evacuation hospitals and field hospitals overseas. Therefore by the time a patient arrived at an stateside SCI center he had numerous decubitis ulcers (bed sores). These damnable things required months of special care to heal. In my case I spent about four months in a Stryker frame. This was a narrow bed about seven feet long. It had two matching halves, one on top of the other. These were fastened at each end on a pivot so they could rotate. The bed part was about four feet off the floor so a nurse could more easily care for the patient. In my case I was laid out on my back in a Stryker frame which had the top half removed. Every hour the caregiver would come, place the other half of the "sandwich" on top, fasten them firmly together and rotate me onto my stomach for an hour. Then in an hour the process was reversed. These beds were very uncomfortable and I developed a deep hatred for my Stryker because it was not only a painful experience but also very boring. However my bed sores were healing and in about four months were completely healed. These days a patient is placed in a comfortable flotation bed that has air generated waves to relieve the pressure points and keep blood circulating.

Improvements in the care of SCI patients during the past 55 years are remarkable. For example, there was very little rehabilitation when I was a patient. The injured person either got well and learned how to cope, or lay in a hospital until they died, usually in a few years. I taught myself how to get from my wheel chair to the floor, crawl into the stall, climb up onto the toilet and take care of my bowel program. Most of us did exercise regularly and became very muscular in the upper half of our bodies. Most paraplegics developed much more muscular arms and shoulders after their injury than they had before their injury. Outside of the hospital there was no one to help one transfer from bed to wheel chair and vice versa but this was easy for most of us very muscular guys.

Most men who receive a spinal cord injury are young, whether the injury was received in wartime, in a sporting event, or a car wreck. Young men take more chances than older men. Because of their age the problem of sexual function is constantly in their minds. Most SCI men lose their ability to have a normal erection or ejaculation. For WW II veterans there was essentially no help for this tragedy. However through the years a great deal of research has been done and real progress made. One of the more interesting developments is electronic stimulated ejaculation.

Although it is successful in only a small percent of the cases, there is still research being done

and improvements are coming. Probably the most often used method for successful sexual intercourse has been implants of silicone rods in the channels that would ordinarily become engorged with blood under pressure causing erection. Although this does not give the man full sensation of sexual intercourse, it helps psychologically, and more important, the female partner can feel the full impact of a sexual experience. Another thing that helps many paraplegics and quadriplegics in more current times is Viagra. It often brings on a normal erection.

"If we men married the women we deserve, we
should have a very bad time of it."

Oscar Wilde.

While I was hospitalized at Louisville, three of my pre war girl friends came to visit meat various times. I liked them all, but I especially had loving feelings for Betty Jane Christian who I met when I was stationed at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma before my Battalion was shipped over seas. I attended the Centenary Methodist church and was invited to her house for Sunday dinner. We also attended youth fellowship together on Sunday evenings and had a couple of Sunday afternoon dates.

When I was in the hospital in Louisville, Betty was working as a clerk typist for the War Department in Washington, DC. The second time she came to visit me I asked her to marry me and unbelievably she said "yes". Dear Major (doctor) Pierce warned her that I probably would not live more than two or three years and surely not more than five years, but she married me in spite of that. She did not tell me until several years later that Major Pierce had told her I would be so short lived.

I have been known to tease my wife that when she married me she thought she was going to become a rich young widow, but at the time of this writing she has been caught in a marriage that lasted 58 years. Every thing else I have done with my life pales in comparison to the joy I have received in my marriage to Betty. She has had to put up with all the problems of a paraplegic husband for all these years plus raising two adopted sons. Our older son was diagnosed as being bi-polar (then called schizophrenia) which made it impossible for him to keep normal social relationships. At times he was nearly impossible to live with. He had terrifying nightmares and was always on the verge of getting himself into serious trouble. Betty was a courageous mother through the years of psychiatrists and mental hospitals. She took excellent care of her husband and sons no matter what life brought us.

Betty was a genius in the kitchen and always had a dozen or so cookies for the children to take when they were leaving the house for some church event or Boy Scouts or whatever. When our niece Carolyn was starting to junior high school in Oklahoma one year, there was a major problem with her mother's health. We took Carolyn to live with us and she lived with us for eight years through high school and Business College. It was a privilege to have Carolyn as a part of our family and Betty was a good substitute mother. Betty made beautiful clothes for her and on prom dates Carolyn was the Belle of the Ball.

Betty has always been a leader in the church, after all that is where I met her before the war. After we married we moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico and joined First Presbyterian Church. We soon became active in helping to organize young couples into a fellowship and church service club. Our pastor, Dr. Everett B. King admired her and made use of her talents in a number of ways. For example he found out that she could organize and run the kitchen cooking and preparations for a sit down dinner of 300 members, so she had that job many times. He also learned that she could bake a loaf of bread that melts in your mouth. Thursday was a day on which she baked five loaves of homemade bread. It was a rare Thursday that Dr. King did not stop on his way home for a buttered heel of Betty brown Bread. Quite often that stop resulted in Betty sending him home with a fresh loaf of bread.

"The wonder of babyhood."

In 1947 Betty and I decided that with all our friends starting to have babies and families, we wanted to do the same. We consulted an expert on paraplegics and their chances to father a child. The answer was slim to none. However he suggested that we might want to consider a new procedure wherein a donor sperm was inserted into the woman, hopefully at the same time as the eggs were ready. So what did we have to loose except a few dollars? Betty was so ready to have a child we thought she had become pregnant. Actually she had a "false pregnancy" which had all the signs of really being pregnant but the gynecologist finally convinced us that she was not pregnant. But we were not ready to give up so we talked to our doctor about adoption. He explained that under New Mexico law he could place a baby with a family but first the couple had to be approved for adoption by the Child Welfare Social Service. Our next move was to apply for a child and request approval for adoption. The Social Worker was to visit our home at unscheduled random hours so she could evaluate what kind of home a new child would have with us. She told us what would be needed for their approval so we got busy and equipped the spare bedroom as a nursery.

Betty was elected and ordained Elder in our church, and she also was elected and ordained Deacon. She fulfilled both callings with grace and dignity. One year the pastor asked her to serve as chair of the Chancel Guild. I watched her work the telephones, recruit about a dozen workers and she did the best job ever in serving as chair of the Chancel Guild of our church. These are just few of the ways in which she served the church. Early in our membership at First Presbyterian Church Dr. King asked her to give a talk to the session about dedication and stewardship. Our Session was composed of many successful businessmen in our community. Betty was just 22 years old, and shy about being in the limelight. She suffered and quaked in front of those men, but they were very moved by what she said. A number of them came to her and thanked her for reminding them of some very important things in life.

When Betty became a great grandmother, she took on the job of baby sitting her two months old great grandson every day until he was 10 months old and too active and heavy for Betty to manage. She also did this for her great granddaughter from the time she was 5 weeks old. It has been a joyful experience for me to be her husband for 57 years. When many women in their late 70's have retired to the TV soap operas, Betty kept serving others in ever so many ways. The deacons of our church provide refreshments at receptions after memorial services for church families who have lost a loved one. At these receptions Betty usually helps in the kitchen with

preparations.

A young man in a wheel chair.

After we moved to Albuquerque I took it easy for a few months but this soon became boring and monotonous. We had bought a new home and had been lucky enough to have a new Ford sedan. We had a new church home and I felt like it was time for me to get a real job. I registered with the New Mexico Employment Agency. Within two weeks I got a phone call from a man who asked if I was qualified to help him start a new radio station in Albuquerque; I was to be the engineer who would order the equipment and supervise installing it. Although my training as an electrical engineer had been in electrical generating plants and the distribution of power, I decided I could give it a good try. So I started work by visiting the Dean of engineering at the University of New Mexico, Dr. Tapy and asked him for guidance in working with the complex electronics of a radio broadcast station. A day or two later Dr. Tapy phoned me to ask if I might consider a job with the government in some very secret work which was related to but not specific to my college training. He assured me that he thought I could do the work, so I said I would be glad to consider it. The next day an army colonel, Colonel Ord, visited me at my home and offered me a civil service job. He said that I would be required to have a "Q" clearance, which was even higher than Top Secret clearance to do this work and would not be allowed to share with my friends or even my wife the work I was doing. He wanted me to start to work the following Monday at 7:30 AM and he would arrange for me to get the clearance for admission to Sandia Base and the Sandia Special Weapons Depot. I later learned that to work in that laboratory one must have about six weeks of background investigation by the FBI. To this day I do not know how Colonel Ord bypassed that routine and arranged for me to have a "Q" clearance immediately. This was in 1947, so the nuclear weapons program was very secret in order to prevent the Soviet Union from learning what the United States was developing.

Of course my first year at work consisted of orientation about what was being done in the nuclear weapons program and as much as was known about the progress of the nuclear program in the Soviet Union.

However I felt unsatisfied with the slow pace at which I was getting around to doing tough, productive work. I expressed this feeling to my boss, Air Force Colonel Miller. He agreed with my assessment and asked if I thought I could do some technical writing. I said that although I was not trained in this field I was skilled with English, spelling and most engineering terminology. The United States was manufacturing nuclear weapons and placing them around the world in "stockpiles" so that they would be available at a moment's notice. During this period just after the war there were only a "handful" of men who knew the entire process of manufacturing, using and maintaining atom bombs. When the U. S. began to stockpile atom bombs, military troops were responsible for transporting, handling and caring for them. The scientists at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories wrote technical manuals about these weapons and how to keep them ready for use. But those scientists wrote in technical terms that the average soldier could not understand. My job was to translate the scientific manuals into plain English the average soldier could understand. This was a challenging job and I enjoyed it. I received several commendations for my work.

However I felt that I was in a desk job that was more confining than what I planned to do with my life. In 1951 I took an extended leave of absence so that I could go to graduate school at the University of New Mexico school of Electrical Engineering. When Dr. Tapy found out that I was in graduate school he asked me if I would be his Graduate Associate. He was to teach and administer. I was to teach in his absence but mostly conduct laboratory classes and do the drudgery tasks like grading exam papers of undergraduate students and take care of much of Dr. Tapy's correspondence. I would write letters for him to approve or not and sign. Soon he felt he could trust me to take care of most of his correspondence without his supervision. He had me sign it "Edward S. Brown for Dr. William J. Tapy." In addition to all this I was taking 15 hours of graduate engineering courses.

I did not realize what was happening to me but I was gradually wearing myself out. I became ill with a nasty kidney infection that was out of control because my body was too "run down" to fight it off, even with antibiotics. My urologist told me that I must take some time off and let my body recover. He sent me to a specialist at the Veteran's Hospital. And the specialist immediately said that I must be transferred to a spinal cord center in Long Beach, California. Two days later I was on a plane to Los Angeles where a Veteran's Administration (V. A.) automobile met me and drove me to the V. A. hospital in Long Beach.

After three months in this Spinal Cord Injury Center at Long Beach California I was rested up and had been given some ideas about how to take care of myself better. In the meantime Betty had driven to Long Beach with our three year old Larry, and located a reasonably priced small home on the beach at Seal Beach, California. Those were some great days because Betty had cousins all around the Los Angeles area. I was able to get several three-day passes from the hospital so we visited all the cousins and I got acquainted with the rest of my new family. In those days the Los Angeles area was beautiful and not terribly crowded, so we had a great time.

"Today the real test of power is not capacity to make war but capacity to prevent it."

Anne O'Hare McCormack

Then it was time to go home to Albuquerque and see if I could get my job back. Not only was I able to do that, but I was given a much more responsible job with more pay. I did not object to that. The Sandia Special Weapons Depot was given more and more responsibilities. One of the assignments I was given upon my return was to teach field grade officers how to carefully maintain nuclear weapons. Field grade officers are Majors, Lt. Colonels and full Colonels. This was in 1952 and it was becoming obvious that the stockpiles of nuclear weapons the United States had placed in strategic places around the world were not being adequately cared for.

In 1949 the United States had begun stock piling nuclear bombs in many places of the world, such as: Spain, England, West Germany, France, Japan, Okinawa, South Korea and Taiwan. As early as the mid 1950's there was a big repository of nuclear bombs in caves hollowed out of the Manzano Mountains near Albuquerque. These were carefully maintained and treated like someone's beloved automobile. The entire area was a "clean room" which means no dust, period. One could not enter except in special clothing and shoe covering. Temperature and

humidity were also precisely controlled. Each weapon was maintained by its own squad of military personnel. Each weapon was tenderly cleaned and tested for correct functioning every day. Why so much care in maintaining these weapons? Because an accident could be deadly. It was inconceivable that one could be allowed to detonate accidentally; yet it was necessary to make sure they were functioning properly if the need arose to use one or more of them. The primary purpose of our job, as a part of the "Cold War" was to prevent a war from happening by misunderstood activity or an accident.

I wrote course manuals for the textbooks that these field grade officers would be using for study guides. I taught classes of about 25 officers and each course was six weeks long so it was necessary that much material be covered in a short time. After about a year of these classes I was assigned the task of teaching company grade officers (captains, first and second lieutenants) the same material. Each officer upon completion of the training was expected to be assigned to a nuclear weapons group where he would be the expert and gradually train his personnel in proper maintenance of the weapon or weapons under his control. Having finished teaching field grade officers and company grade officers I was assigned the job of teaching the same information to the three top grades of enlisted personnel. By the time two years of this training was completed there was a large group of men who were well trained in the necessary skills to maintain nuclear weapons. Evidently we did a fair job because there has never been an accident in the care of nuclear weapons, that is, the United States has never experienced an unplanned detonation, nor has one ever failed to perform as intended in test programs. I do not know that our training program at Sandia Base was the only one in the U. S. but I do know that our lesson guides were copied by military organizations in other parts of the allied world. Also I do not claim to have been the sole author of these training manuals and courses. Everything I prepared was reviewed and edited by military officers of rank and knowledge so that the final product was high in quality and content.

In 1958 it was decided by the planners in the Pentagon that the United States military had to have another standards laboratory very much like the laboratory at the Bureau of Standards in Virginia. And with such a center of scientists and experts as were working at the Sandia Laboratory this was the logical place to establish it. Sandia Laboratory was located in Sandia Base near Albuquerque. It was operated by the University of California and staffed by engineering and scientific experts in every facet of nuclear weaponry and testing of nuclear weapons. Also the location was ideal because it could service all military locations in the western United States. Later, with the improvements in air travel, our standards lab served all military locations in the Pacific basin. I was given the job of designing the laboratory with the assistance of experts in Sandia laboratory.

About a year later the work load of the United States Bureau of Standards had expanded so much that it could not keep up with the needs of a nation that was pioneering in research and design of all areas of scientific advancement. It was decided the U. S. should establish another "primary" standards laboratory. Primary laboratories were the highest level of specialized instruments from which all other pressure, time, temperature, distance, altitude, acceleration, and geometric location were derived. Specialized instruments would be hand carried to the primary standards laboratory where they would be calibrated and adjusted for accuracy. Then these instruments, "standardized precision instruments", could be carried to storage depots for daily calibration of

nuclear bomb fusing and operating systems.

It was at this time that Colonel Ord (now General Ord) appeared in my life again. He said he had been monitoring my work from his assignment in Florida. He said that the United States was ready to start a space program and that it would be done in Cape Canaveral Florida where he had been working for a year. He said that the plans were in place to begin serious construction and operational testing of rockets designed to operate in space. We had several design programs in progress in the military research laboratories, including the Redstone, Centaur and Atlas. He wanted me to transfer from Sandia Base to Cape Canaveral and work with him on carrying out the rest of the design and installation of the Space Research Program. This was an offer I could hardly refuse. However I had unpleasant memories of the three months I had spent in the hospital in California because of overwork. I knew that this program of development he was proposing would be very demanding of my time. Also we now had a beautiful new home in Albuquerque and a second adopted son, so my responsibilities were already about as much as I could manage. Betty said she did not like to think of living in Florida, but would be willing to go if I decided to take on this new and challenging job. After much thought and prayer for guidance I decided to stay where I was so I told General Ord of my decision and the reasons for it. He was very understanding and said that if I ever changed my mind just let him know and wherever he was assigned in the military I would be his first choice as a civilian aide.

"The modern child will answer you back before you've said anything."

Laurence J. Peters

In 1947 we had made many new friends in Albuquerque and most of them were much like we were in that the husbands were recently released from the military and soon got married. They were starting their families and the ladies were either pregnant, or had new babies. We did not want to be left out of this parade of new life so we began exploring the possibilities for us. My doctors advised me that the possibilities of my fathering a child were next to zero. Therefore we examined the possibilities for adoption. Our friend and lawyer, Jim Sperling, told us we could apply to adopt but the adoption had to be approved by the Department of Child Welfare. An alternative to waiting for months or years for a child was that our doctor could place a baby with us but the whole thing still had to be approved by the State Department of Child Welfare. So we applied for approval and were given a list of things we needed to have before we could be approved. Mainly we needed baby supplies and furniture. So Betty, having a much better idea about these things than I, began to shop. Before long she had one of the nicest nursery rooms one can imagine. A social worker from the Department of Child Welfare would drop by our house for a visit, unannounced, from time to time. Finally our waiting period was up and we were ready for approval. Not so; we received a letter from the Department of Child Welfare stating that there was a waiting list of couples who had no handicap in the home and that our application had been disapproved. We were devastated.

We went to our pastor, Dr. Everett B. King for advice and counseling. Dr. King was one of those rare pastors who made it a point to be personally acquainted with most of the bankers, lawyers, doctors and other leaders of the community. He would often meet them for lunch. He knew Judge Swope who handled matters concerning child welfare so he suggested we ask our lawyer

to appeal the decision. This was done and the appointed time arrived for the hearing of our case. The judge looked over the report from the Department of Child Welfare, and said something like "I find no reason to disagree with the decision of the Child Welfare Department". Jim asked to be allowed to address the court and gave the best argument he could on our behalf, such as the fact that I had a job, we were active in our church, and I was an officer in one of the community service clubs. Then Dr. King asked to address the court. He said something like "Judge, everyday you have people appearing before you, people who are going through a divorce, suing someone, or for some other reason are in trouble. Do you know any person or couple who has a perfect life? A person or couple who never have some physical or emotional handicap? I do not and as you know I counsel people who are in trouble almost every day. Maybe the Child Welfare Department can find a couple who wants to adopt and who has no handicap of any kind. When they do I want to meet that person or couple because it will be a first for me". The judge said "The decision of the Department of Child Welfare is reversed and this young couple is approved to adopt a child". We were ecstatic.

In January 1949 we received a phone call from Betty's gynecologist that he had a new baby boy for us. We went downtown to our lawyer's office so the necessary legal papers could be prepared. We were allowed to go to the hospital to see our new baby and the poor little thing was skinny and long. The nurses who had been caring for him could not find a formula that agreed with him. But five days later he seemed to be getting better so we were allowed to take him home. We named him Lawrence Edward after my Uncle Lawrence and me. He had colic for the first three months of his life, but grew normally and developed rapidly. We began calling him Larry. He seemed so unusually intelligent that his kindergarten teacher kept him for first grade so she could work with him. After that she said he needed to be in public school for he second grade to help him mature socially. However his problems socially and his behavior seemed to be getting worse. When he was in the fourth grade, the school principle asked us to come in for a parent conference. He told us that Larry was not reacting normally to everyday school situations and suggested that we have him evaluated by a child psychologist. We did so and thus started years of psychologists, psychiatrists and special schools following which he spent three months in a mental hospital in Dallas, Texas at the age of sixteen years. When he came home we thought Larry had improved and was well when he took his medication. But getting him to take his medicine was very difficult, sometimes impossible. Eventually Larry went to San Francisco and the route of the "hippies"; Height Asbury became famous for "hippies", drug addicts and losers.

However Larry finally decided to do something worthwhile with his life so he attended a TVI in California and became a journeyman machinist and precision sheet metal worker. He was always good with numbers and worked in a "Job Shop" where he became lead man and expert with the equipment. He would take the blue prints, study them, translate the data, and program the computers that operated the machines to make sheet metal devices, often to tolerances of one ten thousandth of an inch. Occasionally he would show up at home for a few months, move in, and live with us until he got a good job. Then he would soon be gone to California again.

It was when Larry was four and Cliff was one year old that Wanda came to live with us. What a blessing this turned out to be for us. She was a wonderful baby sitter and had a lot of common sense. We never had to worry about the boys when we left them with Wanda. She was a great help because Betty and I were involved in so many activities at church and in the community that

we really needed a reliable baby sitter, sometimes on fairly short notice. Wanda was from a small community in Western New Mexico, Quimado, where she grew up on a ranch. She learned all the lessons in life that go with this life style. Her family were wonderful people who attended the small community Presbyterian church. One day Wanda's pastor, the Rev. Bill Lytle, called the pastor of our church and asked if he could recommend a family in Albuquerque who would be willing to give her a home to live in while she attended business college. Our pastor thought of us and asked us if we would give her a home in exchange for baby-sitting and household help. We were happy to give it a try and that was a very lucky decision for us. Several years later I often took a college age person with me and we held worship services at Quimado and Reserve and Datyl on Sunday afternoons when there was no regular pastor.

After adopting Larry, we applied again to adopt and three years after Larry was born our dear friend Dr. Bob Steider had a chubby little boy for us. This time there was no problem with getting the adoption approved. We decided our family was complete, so we did not adopt again. However life had some surprises in store for us. Our younger son Cliff (Paul Clifford) became a neighborhood favorite and always had more friends than were good for him. Between the two boys, as they grew, we had house full of kids much of the time. When he was a teenager Cliff and his friends organized a rock band and they did most of their practicing at our house. Cliff enlisted in the Army when he was eighteen years old. He had been courting a beautiful girl named Mona Janice Strong. Two years later they were married and Cliff was stationed in Hawaii. Unfortunately their marriage did not work out well so were divorced. After nine years in the army Cliff was discharged and went back to college at Eastern New Mexico University where he majored in history and minored in communications.

Sad to say, both of our boys became alcoholics and Larry died at age 45 years of age from complications following a stroke. Cliff was in a terrible accident, which caused severe brain damage, so he has been unable to function in society since then. Therefore he has to be in a nursing home and is there at the time of this writing. This concludes the chapter about our two boys. We remember them with warmth and love because there was so much about them that was lovable as they grew up and they were such an important part of our family.

Our Family continued to flourish and we were kept busy with Tri-Hi-Y, Boy Scouts, Betty and my church committees and a great social life. When Larry was being treated by Psychiatrists, our expenses became unmanageable so Betty went to work. Our friend of many years, Dr. Robert E. Steider hired her as his secretary and assistant. A few years later he closed his practice and moved to Red River, New Mexico where he and his son Tim started a real estate business.

Betty needed to work so she applied for an opening with an ophthalmologist, Dr. Peck, as his receptionist and assistant. We became good friends of Dr. Peck and his wife and enjoyed many social events together. He prescribed a special pair of glasses for me so that I could do very fine work in my laboratory, essentially they were like jewelers lenses except that I could wear them for longer periods of time than one would wear a jewelers eye loop. The optician wouldn't believe the prescription was written correctly until he had checked with Dr. Peck.

Dr Peck admired our German Shepherd dog because she was so obedient. Dr. Peck had a German Schnauzer that had no manners. I think that was because the Pecks never seemed to

have to have their dog trained or did they have time for him themselves. As a boy growing up our son Cliff had a gift for communicating with animals and he trained our dogs and horses using a form of tender love. He could have trained their dog easily, but always had so much to do that it never happened.

I found that my work managing the laboratory was beginning to be too much for me to keep up with and still have time for my boys and my wife so in 1968 I applied for an early retirement from the Nuclear Defense Agency. My first self-assigned job after retirement was laying a tile floor in the little work room which was just off the kitchen. That was a learning experience and I enjoyed it because I could set my own schedule. Also the sprinklers in our front yard had been neglected so my next project was to replace a lot of the sprinkler heads. I continued doing little projects around the house and even tried to have dinner prepared for Betty when she got home from work. We learned that cooking was not my strong suite, so I bowed out of that job.

Our son, Cliff, and his wife Jan were living in Hawaii where he was stationed as a Military Policeman for the army. We decided to go to Hawaii and visit them for a couple of weeks. That was a highlight vacation, so we decided to go back for a visit the following winter. Jan had given birth to a beautiful baby girl named Clarie. We found a nice but small apartment to rent that was located on an elegant sand beach on the leeward coast of Oahu, so we stayed for three months. We had bought a lovely cabin in the Jemez Mountains and for the next few years we spent our winters in Hawaii and our summers in the Jemez Mountains. We had leased our home in Albuquerque where the children had grown up, and finally decided to sell it.. In 1976 we stayed in Hawaii for a year and a half before I decided that Hawaii just did not have the medical facilities that were going to be needed by an aging Paraplegic, so we moved back to Albuquerque and bought a 1200 square foot townhouse. The Albuquerque Veterans hospital was building a special wing just for the care of spinal cord injured people so that gave an extra boost to our ideas of moving back to Albuquerque.

In Albuquerque we continued to be active in our church and often visited other disabled people. We tried to make our lives as useful as possible but at a slower pace than before. My health was not improving nor was I getting any stronger. However when I became 80 years old I began to believe I was going to get along fine in my old age. I had to give up pushing my wheel chair with my own hands because my shoulders and arms were wearing out, but I was enjoying life in an electric powered wheel chair. Just when I decided I was going to get through my old age in good shape (I could easily transfer and take care of myself) I began to loose strength. Gradually I realized that I must have someone to help me with transferring and showering, and thus began my relationship with home caregivers. I had bought an electric powered lift so that on the nights when I did not have a caregiver Betty could help me without much lifting or stress on her aging body.

"A little body often harbors a great soul."

Old proverb.

No story of my life would be complete without bragging about my granddaughter and her family. I mean *really* bragging. Our granddaughter Clarie was a jewel in the desert. Her dad and mother

had divorced so it was up to me to try to be a father substitute. That was a job I thoroughly enjoyed. Clarie was sweet and intelligent as she was growing up and very easy to love. She did well in school and spent three years post high school in the University of New Mexico and Technical/Vocational School of Albuquerque for additional education. Clarie had obtained a work permit at age 14 and went to work for Lerner's department store. She was one of their top sales persons. It was always the case that wherever she worked she was a top producer. After she completed her education she took a job managing one of Albuquerque's large apartment complexes. She did this job so well that her company, which owned apartments in several states, made her one of their troubleshooters. For example if an apartment complex in California was not doing well, she would be sent there to straighten things out. Also if the Corporation was considering an apartment complex for purchase she would be sent to evaluate it for quality.

Now, at age 31, she has her own real estate management company as well as managing an apartment complex. Along the way Clarie fell in love with a very special, hard working man named Brett Miller. In 2001 Clarie, who had been told by a specialist that she could never bear children, delivered a healthy boy. He is named Ty and his birthday is March 8 whereas my birthday is March 9. Thus Ty and Papa can celebrate together. I think Ty gets the more toys than I do.

In 2002 Clarie gave birth to a very healthy and beautiful little girl. They named her Shelby. Thus their family is complete and we are thrilled with our great grandchildren. I tell my friends that at age 85 I am thankful for many things but I am most thankful to have lived long enough to enjoy my great grandchildren. When Ty was about three months old we began to care for him every morning until his Dad came for him. To be honest Betty had the major part of being his GG (great grandmother) and caring for him. We kept him until he was about a year old and too much for us to manage so we placed him in the Child's Garden, a nursery school run by our First Presbyterian Church.

Then along came Shelby and we were lucky enough to have the care of her for part of every day. Such a beautiful child and so much like her mother at that age! Also Brett has two fine children by a former marriage, 12 year old Tanner and 10 year old Kyleigh. I wish they could live in Albuquerque with Clarie and their Dad, but it is not to be. However when they get a week for spring break or a month in the summer with Brett we usually have them for a day because we enjoy them so much. Also we still want to keep up the close relationship with the younger children so we try to have one of them every week.

"Is death the last sleep? No it is the final awakening."

Sir Walter Scott.

At age 85, and having been a paraplegic for 61 years, I do not know how long the Lord will let me continue to enjoy my family and friends but I know this: I have come a long way and am thankful for being allowed to contribute my little bit toward making this world a better place to live. I pay special tribute to my patient, lovely wife who undoubtedly contributed to my

longevity and well being. And I pay tribute to my lovely grandchildren and great grandchildren who have brought so much joy into my life. I leave you now with the thought that I have always tried to live a dedicated Christian life whether as a boy growing up, in college, in the army or since my spinal cord injury. Among other things this means I try to give more than I receive and love my fellow man and woman whether or not the love is returned. Am I perfect? Far from it but we won't go into that. I do not have enough paper to tell about it.

Finis.



